

**THIS ARTICLE IS BY TIM McNELLIE OF THE.... WWW.
BRIDGEVILLE.ORG NEWS MEDIA WEBSITE, WHO ALSO
VIDEO TAPES THE PUBLIC MEETINGS OF THE BRIDGEVILLE
OFFICIALS.**

TO THE PEOPLE OF BRIDGEVILLE !

NobodyKnows What's Going on in Bridgeville !

For nearly two years, the official Bridgeville Borough newsletter devoted part of its front page—the most valuable space in any printed publication—to warning residents that this website, Bridgeville.org, is not an official, borough-authorized source of local news.

For almost the same length of time, the Bridgeville Planning Commission had been working with a consultant to create a \$30 million plan to that would transform much of Baldwin Street into greenspace, re-route Bower Hill Road, and change the flow of McLaughlin Creek.

Can you guess how many times Bridgeville's newsletter shared details of the plan with residents?

Zero.

Yet some borough officials seemed surprised at recent public meetings when it became clear that residents in attendance had no idea what the Baldwin Street plan was, what it might mean for Bridgeville, or even what role the planning commission plays in borough government.

Councilman Nino Petrocelli Sr., who also sits on the planning commission, expressed his frustration about the limited public knowledge of meetings and information.

"There were so many meetings that we had," he said. "The public should know about it. It was in the paper all of the time. It was advertised in the paper. I don't know what we have to do. Send an invitation?"

Bridgeville Borough Council: Oct. 8, 2018

Borough manager Lori Collins noted that the meetings were published on Facebook and were on the calendar of events on the borough's official website, BridgevilleBorough.com.

That's true, but the calendar listing and Facebooks merely said, more or less, "Hey there is a meeting," with no explanation of what "Baldwin Street Conceptual Plan," means.

Bridgeville officials have no legal obligation to proactively reach out to residents with easy-to-digest information about what's happening around town. The borough is only required to publish legal notices about certain meetings and government actions, then make official documents available if residents stop down to request them.

10/20/2018

Nobody Knows What's Going On In Bridgeville | Bridgeville.org

In the past, that might have worked, because residents and public officials could count on newspapers to spread the word about important things that were brewing.

This website—Bridgeville.org—reaches about 2,500 individuals each month, but not all of them are Bridgeville residents. Even if they were, and even if every visitor read every article published here, that would still leave 3,000 Bridgeville residents relying other channels to notify them of important issues.

The good news is that Bridgeville officials don't have to look far to find a powerful communications tool that can keep residents informed. The borough newsletter is already printed on paper and direct-mailed four time each year to every household in the community. When it lands in a mailbox, there's close to a 100% chance that somebody in a household will at least glance at the front page.

But for some reason, the newsletter's editorial priorities in recent years have been:

- Telling you to trim your hedges
- Warning you against reading news that hadn't been approved by borough government
- Warning Bridgeville.org that information in the newsletter is copyrighted (or something).
- Reminding you that there is a bake sale happening somewhere*.

However, this summer's newsletter was an exception. Arriving shortly after the June flood that wrecked Baldwin Street, it led off with a letter from the manager that contained some genuinely useful information for residents.

Perhaps that issue signaled that start of a new direction for the borough newsletter.

If so, we look forward to Bridgeville converting its newsletter into a communications channel that strives to keep residents informed about the most vital workings of local government.

If you go to the borough website looking for details about the plan, you're going to be looking for a long, long time. There are no maps. No design plans. No clear summary of costs. No list of areas potentially impacted.

If you're like most internet users, all you'll find is an outdated meeting notice:

10/20/2018

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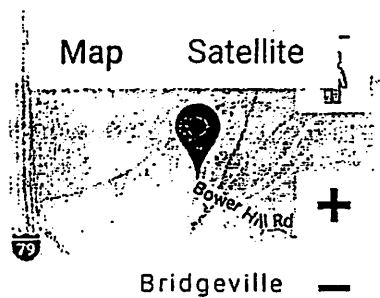
Baldwin Street Conceptual Plan Review

Aug 3, 2018 |

*** THIS IS A UNCLEAR SKETCH OF THE PLAN PROPOSED BY THE
HIRED CONSULTANT TO SOLVE BRIDGEVILLE'S FLOODING PROBLEM.
(A more understandable sketch of the Plan is on the last page.)**

WHEN: August 8, 2018 @
7:00 pm
WHERE: Municipal Building
425 Bower Hill Rd
Bridgeville, PA 15017
USA

PLANNING COMMISSION



Calendar
Add to Calendar

The Bridgeville Planning Commission will conduct a special meeting on Wednesday August 8, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building 425 Bower Hill Road, Bridgeville, PA.

The purpose of the meeting is a review of the draft Baldwin Street Conceptual Plan.

Lori Collins
Borough Manager

A notice for the Aug. 8, 2018 Bridgeville planning commission meeting

There is some detailed information about the Baldwin Street plan on the borough website, but it's buried in the PDF files containing old meeting minutes. Making matter worse, Bridgeville does not publish its PDFs as searchable documents. If you want to find anything about the Baldwin Street plan, you have to open each meeting minutes PDF and read it from beginning to end to see if the Baldwin plan came up in discussion.

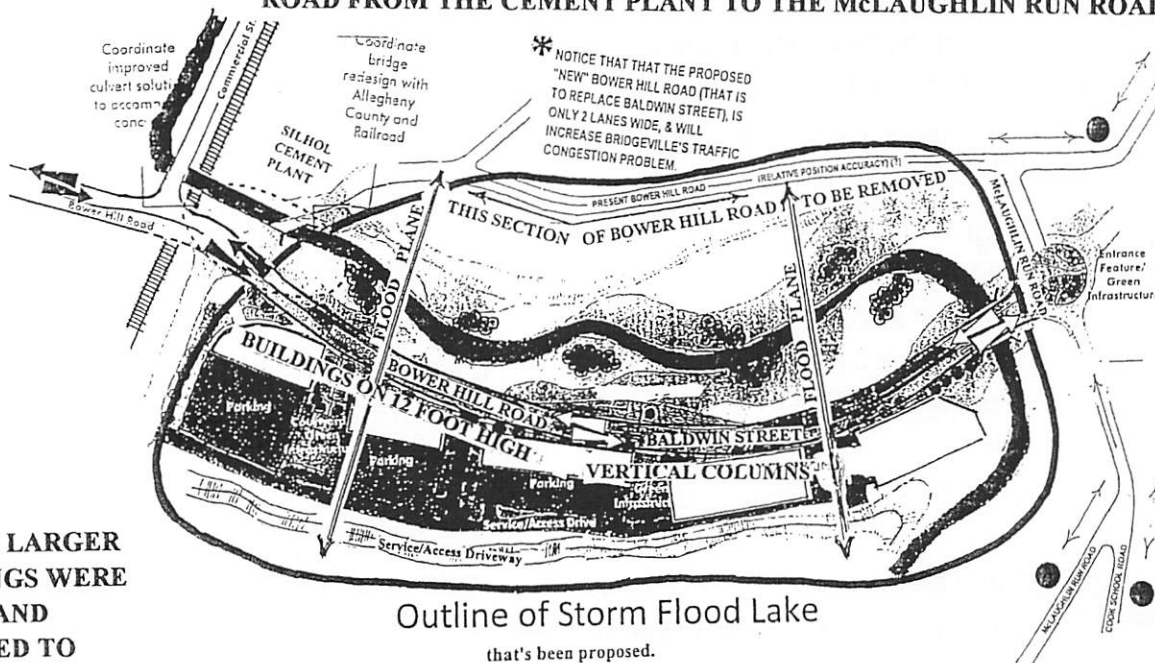
Most normal people are not going to do that because:

- They're busy with work, kids, and family
- Most local government business is quite boring
- Who would even think to look through old meeting minutes for information about a plan you didn't even know existed?

If not, borough officials should re-evaluate why they're spending hundreds—if not thousands—of dollars per year on an informational mailer that provides little essential information.

It's a Bridgeville thing.... think it over.

THIS IS A BETTER DRAWING OF THE HIRED CONSULTANT'S PROPOSED PLAN TO SOLVE BRIDGEVILLE'S FLOOD PROBLEM. IT MAKES THE ENCIRCLED AREA A FLOOD WATER RETENTION LAKE, REQUIRES THE REMAINING BALDWIN STREET BUILDINGS TO BE ON 12 FOOT HIGH VERTICAL COLUMNS, ELIMINATES BOWER HILL ROAD FROM THE CEMENT PLANT TO THE McLAUGHLIN RUN ROAD INTERSECTION.



Outline of Storm Flood Lake
that's been proposed.

THESE 2 LARGER DRAWINGS WERE ADDED AND MODIFIED TO CLARIFY THEIR PURPOSE, BY BOB FRYER

THIS IS BOB FRYER'S PROPOSED SOLUTION TO BRIDGEVILLE'S FLOODING PROBLEM. COMPARED TO THE "OFFICIAL" PROPOSAL, IT DOES NOT TRANSFORM THE BALDWIN STREET BUSINESS DISTRICT IN TO A FLOOD WATER RETENTION LAKE, BUT INSTEAD CALLS FOR.... A MUCH WIDER, DEEPER, LONGER WALLED IN "CREEK BED", A 300 CAR PARKING LOT, & THE FEDERAL, STATE & COUNTY TO RE-DEVELOP THE BUSINESS DISTRICT.

